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TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [MARR](#)  
SUBJECT: (C) VISEGRAD, BALTIC ALLIES DESIRE INCREASED NATO  
DEFENSE PLANNING

REF: USNATO 324

Classified By: CDA. W.S. REID III: REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

1.(S/NF) Summary: The expanded Visegrad (V-4 plus Romania and Bulgaria) and Baltic NATO Ambassadors met September 24 with the Canadian NATO Ambassador, UK NATO DCM and USNATO A/DCM to discuss ostensibly "NATO-Georgia Commission next steps." Upon arrival at the meeting, participants were given copies of attached CZ non-paper on NATO defense planning by CZ NATO AMB Fule. Two hours of debate on defense planning ensued with considerably forward-leaning NATO defense planning initiatives being championed by Expanded Visegrad and Baltic NATO Ambassadors and moderating efforts by the Canadian, UK and U.S. representatives. Generally, the Expanded Visegrad and Baltic NATO missions, to varying degrees, took discussion at the informal London Defense Ministerial as at least a springboard upon which to build formal NATO agreement beginning at the upcoming October Defense Ministerial in Budapest for "enhancing the visibility of Article 5." Topics generally endorsed by the Expanded Visegrad and Baltic NATO missions were: seeking formal NATO definition of Russia as a defense planning threat through the MC 161 process; liberalizing NATO Security Investment Program (NSIP) outlays in at least the Baltics and Poland; development of contingency operations plans for the Baltics and most Visegrad states; revival of NATO live exercises; development of a more robust NATO presence in the Black Sea (Bulgaria was more forward-leaning than Romania and both expressed dismay at Turkish use of the Montreux Convention to limit NATO's activities in the Black Sea basin); possible "High North" regional defense planning (a la a recent Norwegian non-paper); and seeking a "new NRF meaning for collective defense." The Expanded Visegrad and Baltic Allies did not initiate a way forward on air policing and none responded when the U.S. representative requested their views. Although not all Expanded Visegrad and Baltic Ambassador explicitly agreed with the Bulgarian Ambassador's statement that the collective ambition level for defence planning "should stop just short of earmarking (Allied) forces for collective defence," almost all associated themselves with his remarks in their following statements. Neither the Slovak and Hungarian Ambassador nor Slovak and Hungarian Mission NATO representatives were present at the meeting and several Visegrad Ambassadors made clear that the paper and its contents at least were not for discussion with the Slovaks, although it was understood that the proposal was a Visegrad format-like product. End Summary.

2.(S/NF) TEXT OF CZECH NON-PAPER:

CLOSE HOLD

INFORMAL REMARKS ON FOLLOW-UP TO DEFENCE MINISTERS DINNER IN LONDON (19.9.2008)

I. More active intra-Alliance discussion to consider consequences of the Georgian crisis for Alliance transformation has been suggested. A need to consider various steps that we should take in the field of defence policy and planning to (begin bold text) enhance visibility of Article 5 (end bold text) has been stressed.

II. During discussions at and around the dinner following areas have been highlighted:

- COPS (contingency Plans) for nations that are more exposed from security point of view;
- New NRF meaning for collective defence;
- Adequacy/relevance of the current level of (italics begin) Host Nation Support (italics end) NSIP projects;
- Extension of responsibility of operational commands toward collective defence;
- Air Policing;
- Common exercises, both "live" and "table top" (CMX 2010 should deal (play) with Article 5);
- In place forces (Comment: Latvia showed the most interest here. End Comment).

III. The above-mentioned areas could be developed either on an individual basis or in a form of a comprehensive report (in the form of a policy paper) that would assess possibilities to strengthen relevance of allied defence

policy and planning in proposed areas.

IV. Naturally, we should keep bearing on mind the basic principles we agreed upon in London:

- Deployable capabilities are useful for collective defence, as well as for expeditionary operations/operations abroad;
- We are not returning back to the cold war, to revitalisation of the static territorial defence concept.

CLOSE HOLD

END TEXT

3.(C/NF) In the only brief foray into the advertised raison d'etre for the meeting, the Czech, Polish and Baltic Ambassadors called for the newly-agreed Budapest Defence Ministerial NATO-Georgia Commission to have a "NATO-Ukraine-like Joint Defence Working Group" as a "deliverable. U.S., Canadian and UK representatives encouraged the advocating Ambassadors to consider further the effects of establishing such a group on a country with a small defence establishment and NATO mission, particularly given the difficulties that the larger Ukrainian defence establishment and NATO mission have in meeting the group's staffing requirements.

REID